

STAKEHOLDER PLAN

for the Laguna de Santa Rosa
Nutrient, Dissolved Oxygen, Temperature, and Sediment TMDLs

June 27, 2010

This plan describes the effort necessary to have successful, effective, and efficient stakeholder involvement in the development and adoption of the Laguna TMDLs. Stakeholders include all parties interested in the Laguna de Santa Rosa and the Regional Water Board's TMDL project. Stakeholders are landowners, residents, business owners, special interest groups, governmental officials and staff, academics, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties.

Goals

The primary goals for stakeholder outreach efforts are as follows:

1. To communicate and inform stakeholders about the need for the TMDLs, the Regional Water Board's role, project status, scientific analyses and assumptions, implementation options, environmental impacts, and other components of the TMDLs and Action Plan.
2. To solicit and receive relevant and useful input from stakeholders.
3. To gain support for the science and policy portions of the TMDLs to the maximum extent possible.
4. To generate the willingness to execute the implementation measures necessary to meet the TMDLs and attain water quality standards.
5. To do the above with civility and respect for all stakeholders and points of view.

Assumptions

Regional Water Board staff have made several assumptions that effect stakeholder involvement.

- There are a variety of stakeholders interested in the Laguna watershed with a variety of interests, points of view, and time availabilities.
- Regional Water Board staff will need to educate and explain the basic function of the Water Boards, legal authorities, the 303(d) listing process, the TMDL process, the basin planning process, and regulatory tools available for implementation.
- Regional Water Board staff will need to educate and explain how nutrients, dissolved oxygen, sediment, and temperature impact Laguna de Santa Rosa water quality.
- Restoration and monitoring efforts are ongoing in the watershed.

Framework for Stakeholder Involvement

Due to the variety of stakeholders in the Laguna watershed, Regional Water Board staff will organize and undertake several different venues for stakeholder involvement. These include an informational webpage; fact sheets; e-mail and hard copy notifications of meetings, documents, and other information; newspaper notices; document review and public comment; staff responses in writing to comments submitted in writing during the public comment period; phone, e-mail, and letter correspondences; meetings with stakeholders; meetings with other agencies; public meetings; public updates to Board members; and the public hearings. Each of these is described in more detail below.

Webpage

An informational webpage will be maintained with contact information, updates on the status of the Laguna TMDLs, links to available documents, and notices of public meetings, public comment periods, and other opportunities for stakeholder involvement. The webpage will include a statement in Spanish on how Spanish-speakers can get more information.

Fact Sheets

Staff will develop fact sheets and/or newsletters designed to simply and clearly convey information on the Laguna TMDLs. The fact sheets should be short (about one page) and available in both English and Spanish. Staff will work with the State Water Board's Office of Public Affairs to develop the fact sheets.

E-mail & Hard Copy Notifications

Notices of public meetings, document availability, public comment periods, and other opportunities for stakeholder involvement will be sent via e-mail to interested parties that have provided their e-mail address or signed up via the web-based Email List Subscription Form (LYRIS). Interested parties that have only provided a mailing address will receive hard copy notices via the US Post. A database of interested parties is maintained by Regional Water Board staff. The LYRIS List is maintained by State Water Board staff.

Newspaper Notices

Announcement of the Regional Water Board Hearing to adopt the Laguna TMDLs will be printed in the *Press Democrat* for three successive times, in accordance with California Water Code §13244.

General Correspondences

Staff will make every effort to be available to stakeholders in a timely manner whether via phone, e-mail, or letters.

Document Review, Public Comment, & Response to Comments

Drafts of the Laguna TMDLs, including the Basin Plan amendment language, Staff Report, environmental checklist and analyses, and other substitute environmental documents will be made available for public review and comment. This will allow stakeholders to review the proposed documents and provides the opportunity for stakeholders to make comments and suggestions. Staff will make changes to the Laguna TMDLs in response to public comments, as

staff deem appropriate. This will help produce better TMDLs. The review and comment period will last for at least 45 days. Staff will respond in writing to all written comments received during the comment period. The “Response To Comments” document will be posted on the webpage, and made available to the public and Board members prior to the adoption hearing.

Meetings with Stakeholders

Whenever it is possible and reasonable to do so, staff will meet with stakeholders to discuss the Laguna TMDLs. Meetings might be with an individual or with a group of stakeholders that have a particular interest or concern. Staff will make every effort to accommodate requests for such meetings.

Staff plan to meet with many of the stakeholder groups that are currently involved with water quality issues in the Laguna watershed in order to seek input and communicate the status of the Laguna TMDLs. Staff may attend regular meetings of established stakeholder groups, or staff may organize separate ad hoc meetings. Meetings might be face-to-face or via the phone.

Stakeholder groups that Regional Water Board staff are prepared to meet with include, but are not limited to:

- City of Santa Rosa wastewater staff
- Town of Windsor wastewater staff
- City of Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, and SCWA stormwater staff
- Russian River Watershed Association
- SCWA stream maintenance staff
- Sonoma County permit, road maintenance, and other staff
- Caltrans stormwater staff
- UC Cooperative Extension staff
- Gold Ridge RCD Board members and staff
- Sotoyome RCD Board members and staff
- vineyard groups
- dairy groups
- farm groups
- Russian River Property Owner’s Association
- Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation
- Stream and Riparian Stewardship Group of the Northbay Climate Adaptation Initiative
- Friends of Mark West Creek
- Russian River Watershed Protection Committee
- Russian Riverkeeper
- Russian River Watershed Council
- Community Clean Water Institute
- Stewards of Sebastopol Creeks
- Public Officials
- Special Districts

Meetings with Other Agencies

Staff will make every effort to meet with other agency staff to ensure the regulatory aspects of the Laguna TMDLs are consistent with and not duplicative of other policies and government regulations. Other agencies to meet with include, but are not limited to:

- State Water Board TMDL, basin planning, wetlands, and water rights staff
- California Department of Fish and Game
- USEPA
- NOAA Fisheries
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Fish & Wildlife Service

Public Meetings

Staff will host several public meetings on the Laguna TMDLs. During these meetings, staff will summarize key points of the Laguna TMDLs, give status updates, solicit suggestions and comments from stakeholders and the public, and answer questions as possible. The following public meetings are currently planned, although more may be scheduled to accommodate public interest or address a particular issue.

Staff will work with the Office of Public Affairs to plan public meetings, as appropriate. For the larger meetings, a facilitator may be employed to manage the meeting dynamics and allow staff to focus on presenting information and answering questions.

Scoping Meeting

- Purposes: To provide an overview of the Laguna TMDLs, to solicit input on possible environmental impacts for staff to analyze as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis, and to solicit input and comments on the Laguna TMDLs in general.
- Timing: Late 2010, when staff begin to formulate the implementation plan. This will be an evening meeting to accommodate stakeholders that work during the day.
- Location: Regional Water Board office in Santa Rosa

Updates to the Regional Water Board

- Purposes: To inform Regional Water Board members and the public on the details and status of the Laguna TMDLs, to solicit input and comments from Board members, and to hear comments from the public.
- Timing: At least semi-annually throughout the development process. The updates will be set as informational agenda items during regularly scheduled Board Meetings.
- Location: Regional Water Board office in Santa Rosa.

Public Workshop

- Purposes: To provide an overview of the public review draft of the Laguna TMDLs, to summarize staff's recommendations, and to solicit input and comments.
- Timing: Early in the public review and comment period, likely late 2011. This will be an evening meeting to accommodate stakeholders that work during the day.
- Location: Regional Water Board office in Santa Rosa.

Public Adoption Hearing before the Regional Water Board

- Purposes: Regional Water Board adoption of the Laguna TMDLs and an opportunity for public comment.
- Timing: Spring or Summer 2012
- Location: Regional Water Board office in Santa Rosa.

Public Adoption Hearing before the State Water Board

- Purposes: State Water Board adoption of the Laguna TMDLs and an opportunity for public comment.
- Timing: 2013
- Location: Sacramento

Decision-Making Process

During stakeholder meetings and in response to public comments, staff will present the issues or questions; staff will solicit stakeholder ideas, suggestions, comments, and alternatives; and then staff will make the decision on how to proceed. The rationale for major decisions will be documented in the Staff Report. The final decision-making body will be the Regional Water Board, followed by the State Water Board and the USEPA.